



MEMORANDUM

CITY OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK – PLANNING OFFICE
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TO: Planning Board Members

FROM: Kenneth A. Mix, Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Adopting a New Zoning Map

DATE: December 31, 2014

Staff believes it is time to formally adopt a new zoning map. The technology for mapping has changed dramatically since the Zoning Ordinance was adopted in 1959. Tax mapping was recently updated in the City's geographic information system (GIS) and we would like to follow suit with zoning.

Zoning information was recorded on a mylar street map that could be reproduced in a blueprint machine. The base map had no parcel boundaries on it, so the map had to be measured and the measurement then had to be transferred to the assessment map to determine a zoning district line's relationship to a parcel. The different zoning districts were depicted with symbols that would show-up on blueprint copies. Changing the map required "erasing" a portion of the map with a chemical (probably acetone) and then sticking on a self-adhesive symbol for the new district. Later the self-adhesive symbols were not available and the symbols were drawn by hand. The quality of the map would deteriorate with each change.

After computer mapping with GIS became available, the mylar map was not kept up to date. Zoning information has been kept electronically in recent years with the mylar map being used as a reference. This has given us the ability to produce color paper maps at any scale, and to provide the information on the City's website.

While the GIS staff is adjusting the zoning districts to fit the new tax parcel maps, we are suggesting that small changes, of say less than 50 feet, be made to the zoning district boundaries to make them match the parcel boundaries.

Staff is requesting that the Planning Board recommend to the City Council that a new zoning map be developed for adoption and that while it is being developed small changes be made to the district boundaries so that they follow parcel boundaries.

cc: City Council Members
Robert J. Slye, City Attorney
Matthew Owen, GIS Coordinator
Brian Drake, Civil Engineer II